

## His Wish

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/28238283) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/28238283>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Mature</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Choose Not To Use Archive Warnings</a>
Category:	<a href="#">M/M</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Harry Potter - J. K. Rowling</a>
Relationship:	<a href="#">James Potter/Severus Snape</a> , <a href="#">Sirius Black/Severus Snape</a> , <a href="#">James Potter/Lily Evans Potter</a>
Character:	<a href="#">James Potter</a> , <a href="#">Severus Snape</a> , <a href="#">Lily Evans Potter</a> , <a href="#">Sirius Black</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Marauders Era (Harry Potter)</a> , <a href="#">Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence</a> , <a href="#">Potters Adopt Severus</a> , <a href="#">Angst with a Happy Ending</a> , <a href="#">Not Actually Unrequited Love</a> , <a href="#">Jealous James Potter</a> , <a href="#">Angst</a> , <a href="#">Unrequited Love</a> , <a href="#">Unrequited Crush</a> , <a href="#">Incest</a> , <a href="#">(They're not blood-related but just to be safe)</a>
Stats:	Published: 2020-12-26 Words: 6439

## His Wish

by [yjs\\_exoluv12](#)

### Summary

In his town, it is said that if someone writes a wish onto a charm and pins it on the wishing wall, it will fade away when their wish comes true. Some charms stay for only a few hours, some for days, and some for months. It's rare that a wish would stay for more than a year.

For James, his wish was one of the incredibly rare wishes that are never fulfilled.

### Notes

Merry late Christmas and happy holidays

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

In his town, it is said that if someone writes a wish onto a charm and pins it on the wishing wall, it will fade away when their wish comes true. Some charms stay for only a few hours, some for days, and some for months.

Growing up, James watched all sorts of people buy a charm from the vendor and pin it on the wall. Old, young, male, female, rich, poor—everyone had something to wish for.

As a tiny child, he never really had anything to wish for. If he wanted toys, he'd get them. If he wanted sweets, he could call for a house elf to bake some. If he wanted a friend...

Well, maybe he did have one wish.

Many years had passed before he decided to actually make a wish though. Only nine years old, a determined James Potter waddled to the park with his short legs and coin pouch cradled in his hands.

“One paper please,” he politely asked, handing the elderly vendor a few shiny Sickles.

“What color would you like?”

The young boy pointed at a scarlet red one with gold swirly engravings at the bottom. It reminded him of Gryffindor, and right now, he needed all the courage he could get.

The vendor handed him the charm and a black marker, warning him that he wasn’t afraid to hex him if he didn’t return the marker. James frantically nodded and ran off to the nearest picnic table.

He carefully wrote his wish in the neatest way a nine-year-old could, trying to make sure it was absolutely perfect. His heart was beating like a drum by the time he finished.

The vendor walked over to him to retrieve the marker. Curious, they leaned over to read what he wrote and smiled.

“What a lovely wish,” they praised.

James blushed and nodded. He just hoped not an impossible one.

Heart still pounding like crazy, he took his red charm and nervously strolled over to the wishing wall. It was covered head to toe with colorful charms with all sorts of wishes, ranging from love to money to health. In comparison, his wish felt almost silly compared to theirs—but in a way, he was proud of what he wished for.

He knew what would grant him true happiness.

Giving the red paper a soft farewell kiss, he thinks of the beautiful boy that his parents rescued.

James nearly burst into tears when they arrived late in the night with him—not because he was upset that they had brought a new child into their home, but because the poor boy was covered in bruises and dressed in a dirty, oversized tunic. He tried to look strong for the stranger, but alas, he was a big-hearted child through and through.

He made it his personal mission to befriend the new kid, even if he was stubborn as hell. Sharing snacks, involving him in his games, giving him small trinkets—it was only a matter of time before his new friend would crack.

Oh, and he was *so* pretty when he’s not malnourished and covered in bruises. His black hair parted like velvet curtains, revealing a porcelain white face with large obsidian eyes. His nose was as small as a button. His lips were pink and pouty like a fish. It was as if a dark angel had fallen from heaven and into James’s arms.

He even had a fancy name. Severus Snape. It was a sharp and powerful sounding name, perfect for the cute but clever boy—though he didn’t seem to like his last name.

James suggested changing it to Potter, only to be met with fierce disgust. A shame, really. Severus Potter had a nice ring to it.

*'...Or not,' he grimaced. 'Okay, maybe it was the right call not to change it.'*

Despite being the same age, they were still two different beings from two different worlds.

James was brought up in the wizarding world, Severus only knew from books and hearsay.

James has never met a Muggle in his life, Severus was raised to be like one.

James loved fun games, Severus loved boring books.

James liked Severus, Severus didn't seem to care about him.

That's why he sneaked out and navigated his way to the nearby park. This wish was something he had been thinking about for nights on end, trying to figure out what he truly wanted. He only had enough loose change for one piece of paper so he had to make it count.

Was his wish too selfish? Would it be wrong to be selfish for once? Was it even possible? Would it make him happy if it came true?

It took until early morning to decide on what it would be.

Pinning the red charm on the wall, he took a step back to admire his wish and was relieved that he actually did it. It didn't matter if it stayed there for days or weeks or months; all that mattered was that it would come true eventually.

James just hoped Severus wouldn't mind that he dedicated his first and only wish to him.

Their first Christmas together, days after he pinned his wish on the wall, was a small event with only James, his parents, and Severus. His parents had wanted to focus on making it known that Severus was family now, and James couldn't agree more.

He handed his messily wrapped gift to Severus, who hesitantly accepted. Unlike James, who impatiently opened every gift, Severus was careful in preserving the wrapping and ribbons. Though it made it all the more better as he watched with anticipation as Severus unveiled the toy wand.

A warm feeling engulfed his chest when he saw Severus's smile, even if it was only for a split second.

His parents handed the two of them a wrapped box, saying it was a gift for the both of them. James graciously accepted it, only to hand it off to Severus and declare that he deserved the honors of unwrapping it on their behalf.

When he burst into tears over the leather photo album filled with family pictures with Severus, James hugged the raven-haired boy and reassuringly kissed his forehead. Unbeknownst to the two boys, Mrs. Potter had snapped a photo and muttered something about next year's album.

Yes, his wish didn't come true on their first Christmas, but it was nevertheless a fond childhood memory.

Their second Christmas was their first once since entering Hogwarts, and there was much to talk

about.

“Really, Slytherin?” James crossed his arms and huffed. “You’re too good for a house of slimy snakes!”

Severus gave him a stern look before readjusting his scarf—which, much to James’s dismay, was green and silver.

That’s right. His intelligent, snarky, all-around-talented brother was a Slytherin—and it took all three of his roommates to prevent him from marching up to the Sorting Hat and drop kicking it into the lake.

Sirius thought he would be angered at his brother, but James knew better than that. It wasn’t that his brother was at fault because he had qualities of all four houses and was simply too good for any of them. Rather, it was going to be Slytherin’s fault if they tried to corrupt him with their disgusting pureblood values and dark magic.

As a newly sorted Gryffindor, he would dedicate his life to protecting him.

“What’s done is done,” Severus sighed, gesturing at his uniform. “You can’t change my house.”

“I wouldn’t dream of it,” he innocently fluttered his eyelashes, making a mental note to trash his plan to re-sort him.

“Right...”

“But mark my word, Sev, I won’t let those snakes corrupt you! If any git is giving you a hard time, you can come to me and I’ll hex them!”

“Except I’m better at defending myself than you are,” the raven-head sneered. James pouted but didn’t refute his jab.

After wishing his brother a good night, he wrapped his red scarf around his neck once more, suited up for the winter cold, and snuck out the house, careful to not alert the house elves. Like a ninja, he swiftly dashed to the park without a sound.

When he reached the wall, he stood in front of it and stared, waiting.

*‘Midnight,’* he impatiently thought, glancing at the watch Remus gifted him.

Right on time, the colorful charms scattered across the wall began to dissolve into shiny dust and get swept away by the winter breeze. Their wishes had just been granted like a Christmas miracle.

But for the young boy, his miracle wasn’t coming.

The red charm was still on the wall, surrounded by disappearing charms from people who were having better luck than him. Almost like a survivor of war, it taunted him with its resilience.

“Merry Christmas,” James said to no one in particular before walking away.

For their third Christmas, James decided to invite Sirius over to join them and escape his hellish family, much to Severus’s dismay.

While they didn't *hate* each other, it was clear that his two best friends weren't exactly fond of each other. Ever since the train ride, it's been the same cycle—Severus would call Sirius a two-dimensional blockhead and try out new hexes on him while Sirius would purposefully mess up his name and pull off cruel pranks on him.

It was a miracle neither of them had been expelled yet, though that might be due to their clever nature—one of the many qualities he found that they shared.

That's why he sought to make this Christmas extra special by doing away with their silly rivalry and instead build a potentially beautiful friendship between the two most important boys in his life.

He planned out multiple group activities that should've helped form a bond but so far, it's actually caused more messes for James to clean up.

Baking Christmas treats? Sirius accused Severus of lacing them with poison, leaving the cookies to explode in the oven and give James's mother a mini-heart attack.

Flying in the backyard? Severus was never one for flying, and he made use of this missed opportunity to throw snowballs at Sirius while he was in the air.

He even had to scrap a visit to the wishing wall, fearful that they'd wish for each other's death.

The only activity left before Christmas was decorating the Christmas tree, which James prayed was going to end in arguments and arguments alone. His parents had left them treats before leaving to buy a new oven, which meant he was on his own if things went south. He would faint if he turns away for a second and finds out that they've burnt down the tree.

"Don't ruin the tree for the rest of us," he said, sending his best friends a stern look.

Sirius snorted. "Believe me, I don't want anything to do with decorating."

The teen stuck out his tongue and motioned for Severus to back him up, only for the Slytherin to yawn and lazily munch on a biscuit.

So much for a group activity.

"Well, my parents said you have to help so get to work, lazy bums!" he commanded before handing them various ornaments.

They worked in silence for the most part, with James taking charge with lights and the other two occasionally putting up an ornament. Unbeknownst to him, the two were beginning to grow visibly tired and bored with decorating.

When Severus found a bundle of ribbons, he turned to Sirius, who nodded.

"Hey, can one of you hand me the—aaHHHH! What are you-hAHAHA! STOP-AhahaHAHA!!!"

Sirius grabbed James by the torso and started tickling him, somehow striking the most ticklish spots. Severus was quick to grab his flailing arms and tie them together with the ribbon, complete with a tight knot worthy of a Boy Scout badge.

"Hey, what in the world are you—mmhh!"

The Slytherin sat on his legs and shoved multiple biscuits in his mouth, forcing him to chew while Sirius moved to tie up his ankles.

Once assured that the knots were secured, the unlikely duo sat back and admired their handiwork with goofy grins plastered on their smug faces.

“I’m not a professional or anything, but I think we did a good job!” Sirius proudly exclaimed.

Severus chuckled and handed him a mug of hot chocolate. “Not a bad addition. I guess we have good taste,” he said, taking a sip of his own.

It was a happy Christmas for James, just as it was a confusing one. He was more than delighted to see his best friends get along after their successful prank on him, but he couldn’t help but feel strange.

It was like they were getting along *too* well.

Upon visiting the wall again at night, he was reassured that it was all in his head. He shrugged it off as childish jealousy, but little did he know, that foreign feeling will soon be all too familiar.

For now, the charm would stay put and James would proudly boast about his mediating skills for several weeks ahead of them.

James’s fourth Christmas with him was off to a horrifying start.

His mother, after cooking up a delicious course of blueberry pancakes and fried potatoes, decided to surprise them with a sudden announcement.

“Hey kiddos, we’re going to the wishing wall after breakfast!”

He nearly choked on a potato.

“Think carefully about what you want to wish for,” she said, patting James’s back. Severus gave him an odd look but shrugged it off, probably used to his strange behavior.

Would Severus recognize his wish? His handwriting was much different than before, but still...

“What are you going to wish for?” he nervously asked.

“Nothing.”

“What!? Sev, there must be something-”

It only took a quick glare to shut him down.

The awkward atmosphere was carried with them as they arrived at the wall in all its colorful glory. There was a crowd admiring the wall and many long lines for the busy vendors. Not wanting to lag behind, their mother quickly ushered them into a line.

“C’mon, we’re already in line. Think of something, anything!”

“It’s a waste of money-”

“But it will come true!” he insisted. “And think of the possibilities? Is that not worth more than a few sickles?”

Severus averted his gaze, which he always did when he wanted to avoid talking.

“...Sev?”

“I used to wish everyday that my parents would be nice to me,” he said with a low voice. “I stopped because I knew it wouldn’t come true, no matter how hard I wished. And I don’t see how a stupid wall can somehow grant me my wish just because I pay for a piece of paper.”

James’s hazel eyes widened and he reached out, wanting to comfort him. “I-I’m sorry Sev-”

“James! Severus! I paid already, so please come up and pick one,” she said, holding up a baby pink charm with flowers stamped on it.

Severus glanced at his stretched out arm, walked towards the vendor, and quickly muttered his order before walking away with their mother, leaving him behind. He sighed and turned away, hoping he could make up for his mistakes later.

His jaw nearly dropped to the ground.

The vendor staring down at him was the same one from years ago, though they’ve aged a little more since then. Upon seeing the nervous hazel-eyed boy from back then now grown up into a slightly taller, still very nervous hazel-eyed boy, their wrinkled face softened into a warm expression.

“What color would you like?” they asked, just like they did years ago.

“Uh, t-that one please,” he stammered out, pointing at an emerald green charm with silver borders. The elderly vendor glanced at Severus’s figure from afar before smiling and handing it to him.

“Good luck,” they whispered before speaking with the next customer. James blushed and quickly ran off to find his family, who were sitting on a picnic table. Severus looked bored out of his mind while their mother chirped about her plans with her sister. Anxious, he decided to play it safe and sit next to his mother.

*‘What to write...’* he wondered, resting his chin on his hands while staring blankly at the charm.

He needed to make it up to Severus, which meant once more, James would have to dedicate another wish to him. Like the genius he was, he instantly thought of a brilliant wish and moved to grab a marker, but then he realized he had forgotten to ask for a marker.

“You forgot,” Severus dryly stated, handing him a silver marker. He shyly thanked his brother before messily scribbling down his wish, too flustered to neatly write it down.

James tried to peek at the covered charm in his hands, silently praying to Merlin that he wasn’t mad at him. Gathering up a little courage, he decided to ask directly and hoped his mother would protect him if he snapped. “What did you write?”

The Slytherin sighed and shoved a scarlet charm in his face. Scrawled in Severus’s thin, swirly handwriting was a simple but kind wish.

*James won’t get sick when he goes out this year.*

“Happy?”

The Marauder couldn’t help but smile.

“It’s not like it will actually come true,” Severus scowled, but his reddening cheeks betrayed him.

While it was a very kind gesture that made James’s heart flutter with joy, he was also terrified that his brother had found him out. The Marauder merely kept his infamous good-boy smile on, not wanting to say anything that might be even more incriminating. He would have to be more careful from now on.

Severus glanced at his charm and snorted, muttering about how wasteful his wish was.

*My brother’s wish will come true*, the emerald charm read out.

Together, they went up to the wall and posted their charms next to one another. Their mother forced them to pose with their charms for a picture, which would later produce a photo that he would fondly look back on from time to time.

James would later visit the wall on the night of their fourth Christmas and admire the spot where their wishes used to be. He was also, as usual, comforted and saddened by the familiar presence of his first one.

But hey, at least he didn’t get sick!

Their fifth Christmas was the first one away from home, at his aunt’s luxurious manor for a few nights. James and Severus were dressed in their finest dress robes and matching ruby brooches, though neither of them wanted to be there. That’s why they were standing in the empty lounge room, far away from the party.

“How come you’re not mingling with your cousins?”

James sadly smiled. “My parents had me late, so everyone else is much older than me.”

“Must be lonely.”

“Why? I have a brother my age,” he pulled the Slytherin to his chest and happily sighed, enjoying his masculine scent. “I don’t need anyone else...”

“James! Severus! Time for dinner!”

Severus was the first to break away from his hold, which stung just a tad bit. Nevertheless, he walked alongside him to the dining room and sat next to him and his mother. House elves came and went, decorating the table with the most luxurious cuisines James has ever seen.

“Old money,” he jokingly rolled his eyes, earning a brief smile from the Slytherin.

The Marauder turned back to his food, only to immediately clutch his head in pain. Suddenly his senses were heightened and the room was much louder than before, piercing his poor eardrums.

“You okay?” Severus frowned.

He closed his eyes for a few seconds, trying his best to stay focused while the voices inaudibly echoed around him. His heart was louder than before, noisily going *ba-dump ba-dump ba-dump* like an elephant stampede.

“I just need a minute.”



However, that “minute” lasted much longer than one. They were almost through the first course and yet James couldn’t focus on anything. He gripped his spoon tightly, unsure of how to respond to the swirling table in front of him with blurry meals.

He was going insane.

Severus methodically ate a small plate of hors d'oeuvre while keeping an eye on James. At this point, it was only a matter of *when* his brother was going to intervene because he certainly wasn’t going to let him stay like this.

Noticing his flushed cheeks, he snapped.

“Excuse us,” the Slytherin hurridly stood up and dragged James away from the party and into their room, shoving his weak body onto the bed.

“Sev, I’m fine-”

“Yeah, you’re burning up,” he snarled, quickly disrobing James down to his dress shirt. “Must be a fever.”

He couldn’t tell if he was blushing or if it was just the fever that made his cheeks burn up as Severus unbuttoned his shirt.

“Sorry...”

“Stay here. I’ll be back in a minute.”

He was too exhausted to respond, though Severus didn’t seem to expect an answer anyway because he rushed out of the room. James closed his tired eyes and allowed the muffled conversations to lull him to sleep.

The rest of the party was a haze for the Gryffindor, who slipped in and out of consciousness. He recalled Severus’s gentle voice and a wet washcloth being placed on his forehead, but he couldn’t make out any discernible words nor anything else about his surroundings. He didn’t even know how he made it back home.

But he did realize one thing while he was resting at home—he loved Severus. For real.

The teen was incredibly smart but didn’t like being bound by the rules. It made him sharp and innovative, willing to push the boundaries in search of knowledge and in pursuit of glory. Such thirst for more brought both allies and enemies from near and far.

But to James, he was more than the smartest Slytherin on Earth.

He was gentler with him, even if he would never admit it. Those obsidian eyes, cold to the world, would light up with warmth and affection whenever he saw James. In turn, he was more obedient and tame around the snake, more willing to listen to someone he genuinely admired and trusted with his life.

They had such a strong bond, one built with longtime trust and genuine care, but James wanted more.

He wanted to truly be intimate. Their shared embraces would leave him craving for more to fill in the empty hole in his heart—a hole that ached for Severus’s careful touch and handsome face. He wanted kisses. Cuddling. Lovemaking.

He wanted so much more than what he could get.

It wasn't until many days after the dinner when James had finally recovered, that he would return to the wall and once again be met with disappointment. The red charm was still firmly planted on the wishing wall, like a Buddhist monk meditating under a tree.

Though he was a bit saddened that the charm hadn't disappeared yet, he left their fifth Christmas with a new goal; he was going to make Severus love him.

There were many different things about their sixth Christmas.

For one, Sirius was now taking refuge in their home after finally gathering the courage to run away from his terrible family. James and Severus were more than delighted to live with Sirius, though their parents worry about taking care of three mischievous teenagers.

Secondly, James's feelings about Severus has evolved from a childish crush into genuine love. Ever since realizing his feelings, he rarely went a day without imagining a future with him. Weddings, careers, school, intercourse—he had fantasized about all of it during his classes.

But unfortunately, his quest for love was not going so well.

Every time he tried to confess, his heart would freak out and render him practically mute. Countless times, he would walk up to Severus with absolute confidence and completely shut down upon seeing his handsome face and calculating black eyes.

So he shifted gears and changed his strategy. If he couldn't do direct confessions, then he would give gifts and love letters instead.

However, even in writing, he was far too bashful for his own good. The letters with vaguely flirtatious undertones would be interpreted as playfulness, while the letters with "I love you"s and "I like you"s would be crumbled up and thrown into the trashcan the second he writes it down with a shaky hand and racing heart.

Godric Gryffindor would be madly spinning in his grave if he knew how much of a coward James was being right now.

*"Haha!"*

He was cleaning up his room after being berated by his mother, trying his best to soothe his burning jealousy by going through a photo album and enjoy the precious memories. Severus's room was next to his and Sirius was currently in there, catching up with the Slytherin.

*'They're just talking,' he reminded himself. 'You can't burst in there and act out...'*

***Thump!***

James dropped the album and turned around, startled by the sudden noise. The faint laughter and incoherent chatter had died down after the thump, worrying the Gryffindor.

*'Okay, maybe it wouldn't hurt to at least check up on them...'*

After quickly placing the album on his nightstand, he walked out of his room and carefully

approached Severus's room. The door was slightly open, giving him a window of opportunity.

*'I'm just checking on them,'* he reassured himself, but his aching heart didn't seem to believe him. Gently placing his hand against the wall as leverage, he stretched his neck out peek in the room.

James instantly wished he didn't.

Severus was sprawled out on the ground with an unbuttoned shirt, exposing his chest for the entire world to see. He could spot faint hickey marks on his pale neck. His eyes were closed, but his stifled moans indicated that he was very much conscious.

Sirius, on the other hand, was much more active. He was the one pinning the Slytherin down and aggressively kissing him, devouring him like his lips were a main course dish. His leather jacket and shirt were tossed aside, leaving his muscular back exposed for Severus to grasp.

As they broke away for air, he could see the thin string of saliva attached to both of their lips.

"Severus," the silver-eyed boy panted. Mouth curving up into a coy smirk, Severus grabbed the back of his neck and pulled him back in for a second round of feisty kissing.

Unable to stand being there a second longer, James quickly retreated and locked himself in his room. He crawled into his bed and wrapped himself into a cocoon with his blanket, breathing heavily as his heart pounded wildly in his chest. The photo album, flipped to the pages with the Christmas photos, taunted him.

They were kissing.

His best mate was kissing his other best mate.

His best mate, who he loved like a brother, was kissing his other best mate, who he loved like a lover. *With tongue.*

Sirius Black, the man who proclaimed he hated every Slytherin on the planet, was kissing Severus Snape, the boy who proudly boasted that he would stay single for all of eternity.

At the dead of night, he visited the wishing wall and blankly stared at the fragile red charm plastered on it, wondering if its stay was a curse or a blessing.

Yes, there were many different things about their sixth Christmas, but some things had stayed the same

Their seventh Christmas somehow toppled last year as the worst Christmas ever, and it was all Severus's fault.

The adults remained oblivious to what went on behind closed doors, choosing to believe their perfect act—after all, they were the perfect sons, with strong brotherly bonds and hearts of gold.

They don't see the lustful acts Sirius and Severus commit behind their backs. They notice neither James's jealous glares nor his depraved love for Severus. They don't know about the arguments Severus has with him when nobody's listening.

On Christmas Eve, while the Potters and Sirius were eating dinner and having a jolly good time

catching up, Severus and James were upstairs in the empty hallway.

“Cease this,” the Slytherin warned, narrowing his dark eyes. “We’re brothers, James. It’s not right.”

He wanted to laugh and cry at the same time.

Of course Severus would notice his eager stares sooner or later. The dark beauty was as clever as Athena herself, and as terrifying as a dementor when he’s serious—and right now, he seemed *very* serious.

“I can’t help it,” he muttered, trying his best to keep a straight face. He was sixteen for Merlin’s sake, he must be strong.

The other teen merely scowled, clearly displeased by his honesty. But what was he supposed to do? Bottle up his true feelings like he’s done for years now? Pretend like everything is okay? Lie and say he’ll get over him?

James’s love for him could never be broken, no matter how messed up it was.

“You can’t control love.”

“It is *not* love,” Severus coldly replied before storming off.

Moments later, he heard Sirius chuckling downstairs with Severus and broke. He ran off into his room, locking himself in and sliding down onto the ground with his back against the door. With only the dim moonlight lighting it, his room seemed colder than before.

The sense of *deja vu* was far from comforting.

“It’s not fair,” he choked out with watery eyes, shakily clutching his knees. “Why Sirius? Why not me...”

Christmas Day came and went, and for once, James decided to postpone his annual visit. It was funny, really, how the model Gryffindor was so scared of a silly wall, but he couldn’t bring himself to face the truth.

Curiosity did get the best of him, as he escaped his room on New Year’s Eve, an hour before the clock struck midnight.

It was cold, far below freezing, but he didn’t care. The bitter winter chill, the night sky, his family waiting for him inside—it was all meaningless to him now. He couldn’t bear to be in the present when the past and unattainable future haunted him for every second he was alive.

He needed to know the answer to his wish.

Clouds concealed the moon, and the streetlights were far too dim tonight, much to his dismay and relief. Maybe he was getting too caught up in his angst. He could go back and forget about everything. Ignorance was bliss, and James would be protected by it so long as he returns before-

Almost as if it were a cruel joke, the night sky lit up with colorful fireworks, showing him the truth.

He didn’t know whether to be reassured or upset, so he chose to laugh. Laugh because he knew Sirius wasn’t the right man. Laugh because he should’ve known he wasn’t the one either. Laugh

because he was a lovesick fool who kept believing a lie. Laugh because Severus would never love him like that.

“Happy fucking New Year,” James punched the wall and fell to his knees, unable to hold back his tears and pained laughter.

Damn the new year. Damn the stupid wall. Damn his weak heart. Damn everything in the universe that reminds him of what he can never have.

The now faded pink charm, worn down from the years that have flown by, would remain on the wishing wall for another Christmas.

For their eighth Christmas, James went home determined. Every year was worse than the last and he wanted an end to this cruel streak, so he’ll try his damndest to change that.

For starters, he would stop obsessing over a stupid wishing wall. It was always the same thing, so why bother going back when he knew what he would see?

Deep down, he truly believed his wish would inevitably come true—just not how he pictured it would. The best course of action was to let it happen naturally and try to get over his feelings for Severus.

On New Year’s Eve, feeling bitter and upset, the Marauder visits the park again and walks past the wishing wall without a second glance. Instead, he visits the other half of the park and settles for sitting on the bench in front of a frozen pond.

*‘Pretty,’* he thought, admiring the park trees that were wrapped with colorful fairy lights.

He and Severus had made up only a few days after the incident, under the condition that James should keep his feelings to himself and try to move on.

That proved to be easier said than done.

He tried dating Lily Evans in their seventh year but it wasn’t what he was looking for, even if she was a nice gal and an excellent Head Girl.

Unfortunately, someone had the audacity to deem them the “Golden Couple” and suddenly, everyone and their mother was fawning over their relationship like they were the royal family.

“Aww, he’s such a gentleman!” they would coo whenever Lily accidentally dropped something and he would politely pick it up for her. Or whenever he handed her a spare quill. Or literally anytime he did anything remotely polite to her.

“Merlin, he must be head over heels for her!” they’d swoon when James carried her bag for her, which he did only because she was carrying a bundle of posters in preparation for an upcoming prefect meeting.

“Wow, it’s like they’re from a fairytale!” people around them had whispered at the Yuletide ball, oblivious to the fact that during their dance, they stepped on each other’s feet about a thousand times.

It was ridiculous. Whoever started this fable will be getting a taste of James’s flavorful hexes and

an ass-whooping that will send their sorry butt to another universe-

“Room for one more?”

He looked up and saw Severus standing before him, dressed lightly in an unzipped down coat and his Slytherin scarf.

*‘You interrupted my revenge plotting,’* James grumbled, but he kept it to himself.

He scooched aside, allowing Severus to sit down. For some reason, the Slytherin let out a relieved sigh as if he had anticipated a worse response.

Though he supposed it was warranted given that he has been rather hostile to everyone, knowing that they would never leave him alone if he didn’t. And their annoying concern was solely because-

“I heard you and Lily broke up.”

Yeah. That.

The Gryffindor didn’t look him in the eyes. “Yeah, contrary to what people think, we weren’t a ‘golden couple’. I’ll get over it.”

“The right person will come by eventually,” he smiled.

James scoffed.

He knew Severus better than anyone else, and that meant he knew that he was touting false reassurance and faking a smile. It was *he* who would say such sappy shit like that to the more cynical Severus, though he appreciated the sentiment.

It seemed that after all these years, he truly did care for James.

“I happen to be a very impatient man.”

Severus yelped as a set of muscular arms wrapped around his chest and forced them into a warm embrace. James buried himself in his manly scent and let out a pleased sigh, wanting to stay like that for an eternity, though he knew he would only be pushed away

“I don’t need to wait for him to show up,” he muttered into Severus’s ear with a gloomy tone. “I’m waiting for him to accept my feelings.”

“James...”

He tightened his hold around the Slytherin. “No matter how hard I try, I can’t get over you.”

“But Lily-”

“I was the one who broke up with her. Because even when she was kissing me, your lips were all I could think about.”

“But I’m not...”

James couldn’t help but growl, hazel eyes filled with possessive fury. “Don’t think I haven’t noticed you and Sirius messing around. I will hex his balls off if he tries to fuck you.”

Severus reddened and cursed under his breath. It was almost cute how embarrassed he was, his mind cooed.

Thank goodness Sirius had ceased their tomfoolery and started dating Remus instead, otherwise James would've reconsidered his vow to never cast an Unforgivable curse.

"Please give me a chance, Severus. I'll prove to you that my love is real."

"I..." he faltered, unsure of what else to say. James had a feeling that he knew that no matter what, James wasn't going to let this go.

"I promise...?!"

The Marauder was stunned as Severus unexpectedly pecked him on the nose and returned the embrace.

"To think you still like me," he huffed. "You're either a lovesick fool or someone's been spiking your food with love potions for years..."

James couldn't resist his embarrassingly large grin. Feeling cocky, he lifted the surprisingly light teen and placed him on his lap.

"H-hey! We're in public!"

"I know, I know," he reddened. "But I can't help it when you're being so cute!"

"You're the worst," Severus grumbled, though he did not attempt to change their positions.

Gathering up his Gryffindor courage and saying a silent prayer to Merlin, James decided that this year, he'll take another leap.

"I love you too," he cheekily said before kissing him right on the lips. He savored the slightly sweet taste of his lips and was elated to feel Severus's arms wrap around his neck to deepen their kiss.

He felt warm like he could melt away in his arms. The winter chill, noisy birds, and rustling trees escaped his mind because all he could focus on was the man in front of him, the one who stole his heart since they were tiny nine-year-olds. The one with pale lips that haunt his dreams. The one with a sharp tongue that drove him wild. The one who was there for him through thick and thin, even though he didn't feel the same back then.

The same one who was now his, as he was Severus's.

*'So this is what love feels like,'* James closed his eyes and inhaled his new lover's scent once more. *'It's better than I had ever imagined...'*

At the same time, across the park, an almost translucent piece of paper dissolved into specks of glitter, whisked away with the winter wind. The vendor, familiar with the child's wish that stayed for eight Christmases, watched in awe and heartily chuckled.

*I want my brother to find true love,* the messy writing on the charm had once said.

This was way longer than I had intended but hey, the more the merrier I suppose. FYI, the charms are essentially fancy tanzaku but with magic. Japanese people write their wishes on tanzaku and hang them on a tree during Tanabata (star festival).

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